

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/646,822

Applicant(s)

OKAZAKI ET AL.

Examiner

Alix Elizabeth Echelmeyer

Art Unit

1745

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed June 5, 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-14.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This Office Action is in response to the amendment filed June 5, 2007. Claims 1, 1, 3, 6, 9 and 10 have been amended. Claims 1-14 are pending and are allowed for the reasons given below

Reasons for Allowance

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the newly amended claims are allowable over the prior art, specifically Dickman et al. (US 6,265,118), Okamoto et al. (US 6,045,933) and Wattelet et al. (US 6,824,906).

Claim 1 recites a heat exchange unit for a fuel cell apparatus, the heat exchange unit having a laminated structure and the laminations serving as heat exchangers for eliminating moisture from each of the fuel supplied to the fuel cell, the fuel off-gas discharged from the fuel cell, and the air off-gas discharged from the fuel cell. The heat exchange fluid is water that is also used to cool the fuel cell system.

Dickman et al. teach a heat exchanger using water, but fail to teach the use of the heat exchanger to dehumidify the fuel inlet.

Okamoto et al. teach dehumidification of the fuel entering a fuel cell but fail to teach the use of cooling water from the fuel cell.

Wattelet et al. teach a heat exchanger having a common coolant stream for both cathode exhaust and coolant circulated through the fuel cell but fail to teach the use of

Art Unit: 1745

the coolant to dehumidify the cathode exhaust, or the anode exhaust and ingoing fuel as well.

The prior art does not teach the heat exchange unit of the instant invention.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alix Elizabeth Echelmeyer whose telephone number is 571-272-1101. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 7-4:30.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Susy N. Tsang-Foster can be reached on 571-272-1293. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1745

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Alix Elizabeth Echelmeyer
Examiner
Art Unit 1745

aee


SUSY TSANG-FOSTER
PRIMARY EXAMINER